DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 037 110 FL 001 425

AUTHOR	Allen, Edward D.; And Others
TITLE	The Changing Curriculum: Modern Foreign Languages.
INSTITUTION	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	68
NOTE	50p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 ($2.00)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Role, Audiolingual Methods, Bibliographies, *Curriculum Development, *Educational Change, Educational Equipment, Educational History, *Educational Practice, Educational Trends, Instructional Materials, *Language Instruction, Language Programs, *Modern Language Curriculum, Modern Languages, Second Language Learning, Social Change, Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This comprehensive booklet treats foreign language instruction development, current practices, and observable trends. Sections on the changing role of foreign language instruction and on methodology are emphasized. Social pressures, international events, and changing educational attitudes since the turn of the century are discussed. Methods used in audiolingual instruction are described in terms of instructional objectives, procedures appropriate for different achievement levels, and teacher preparation. Other sections on the national interest in foreign languages, materials and equipment, evaluation, scheduling the language program, the administrator's role, and future trends are included. Each section has its own bibliography. (AF)

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The Changing Curriculum
Modern Foreign Languages

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Price: $2.00

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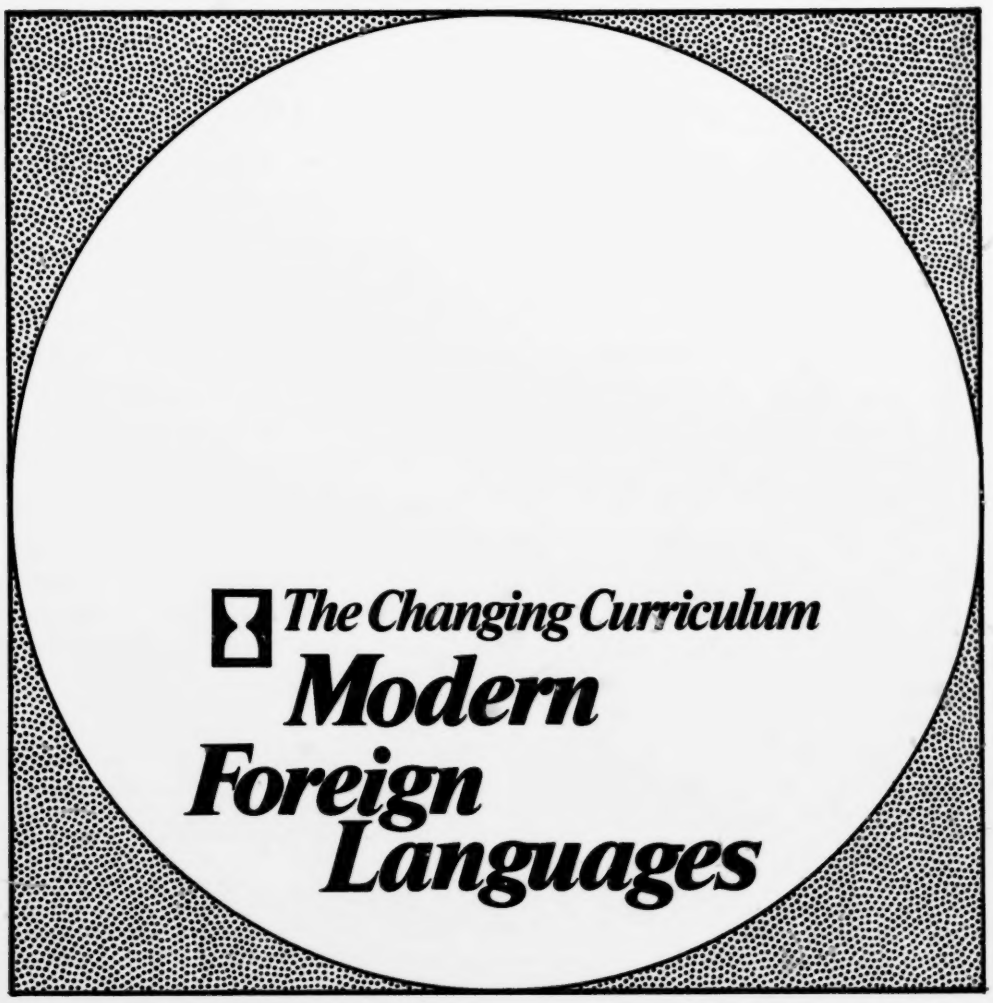
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 68-29671



Prepared for the ASCD
Commission on Current Curriculum Developments
by

Edward D. Allen
Professor of Education
Foreign Language Education
The Ohio State University
Columbus

Frank Otto
Associate Professor of Education
Foreign Language Education
The Ohio State University
Columbus

Leona M. Glenn
Education Consultant
Modern Foreign Language
Title III, NDEA
Division of Elementary
and Secondary Education
The Ohio Department of
Education, Columbus

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Preface

THE CHANGING CURRICULUM: MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES is another contribution in the series of booklets developed by the ASCD Commission on Current Curriculum Developments. In a brief space the booklet accomplishes some important tasks. It deals with a broad range of problems faced by administrators and teachers in making decisions about foreign language teaching and learning.

Beginning with the role of foreign languages in the "national interest" context, the booklet moves through the problems of methodology, materials and equipment, evaluation, scheduling, administration, and future trends in this important area of curriculum development.

Concise but comprehensive, brief but packed with essential information, this booklet should be extremely valuable for all who have a role in decision making regarding the establishment and development of quality foreign language programs in the schools.

June 1968

MURIEL CROSBY
President 1968-69
Association for Supervision
and Curriculum Development

Acknowledgments

THE Association wishes to express its gratitude to the ASCD Commission on Current Curriculum Developments, Glenys G. Unruh, Chairman, and especially to Edward D. Allen, Leona M. Glenn, and Frank Otto, who planned and wrote this booklet.

Final editing of the manuscript and production of this booklet were the responsibility of Robert R. Leeper, Associate Secretary and Editor, ASCD Publications. Technical production was handled by Mary Ann Lurch, assisted by Joan H. Steffenburg and Claire J. Larson.

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1

The National Interest in Foreign Languages

IT HAS become a matter of national interest to increase the number of Americans who can understand and speak a foreign language. Since the inception of the National Defense Education Act in 1958, approximately $65 million have been expended to provide institutes for about 25,000 foreign language teachers who have been retrained to meet the challenge of the audio-lingual approach.

Between 1958 and 1964, the total high school population in grades nine through twelve rose from 7,897,232 to 11,075,343—an increase of 40 percent. In the same six-year period, modern foreign language enrollment grew from 1,298,687 to 2,901,667—an increase of 124 percent. Over 26 percent of the total high school population studied a modern foreign language in 1964 and that percentage has been increasing.[1]

Most of the fifty states now have one or more foreign language supervisors or consultants in the Department of Public Instruction. These consultants are experienced teachers who are well trained in modern instructional approaches, techniques, materials, and equip-

[1] *Foreign Language Annals.* New York: Modern Language Association of America. No. 1; October 1966.

ment. The majority work with Title III NDEA programs, setting standards for and approving materials and equipment to be purchased by participating schools. In addition, all consultants are actively engaged in upgrading foreign language instruction through workshops and other in-service activities, as well as personal visits to individual schools. Information, guidance, and counseling on all aspects of foreign language instruction are supplied by the consultants on request, and are available to all schools.

Many European nations offer English as the main foreign language in their schools. This fact has led many persons to the fallacious assumption that English is rapidly becoming a world language and that most foreigners are proficient in speaking and understanding it. Research states that only one-eighth of the world's population claims English as the mother tongue.[2]

A committee report made at the White House Conference on Export Expansion in September 1963 recommended that ". . . teaching of foreign languages in the public schools be started at the earliest practical age and that schools of business encourage proficiency in at least one foreign language." Exports to non-English speaking countries exceed imports from them by billions of dollars annually.[3]

The Berlitz organization grosses over $8 million per year in an effort to provide foreign language instruction.[4] It is one of many language-teaching schools providing materials to meet the demands for courses emphasizing listening and speaking skills in numerous foreign languages.

There is no doubt that foreign language learning has identifiable educational values. There is evidence that the study of a foreign language increases verbal skills in English in addition to facilitating the study of a second foreign language.[5]

Statistical analyses reported[6] in a Somerville, New Jersey, proj-

[2] William R. Parker. *The National Interest and Foreign Languages.* Third Edition. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, September 1961.

[3] Theodore Huebener. *Foreign Language Careers.* New York: Universal Publishing and Distribution Corporation, 1964.

[4] Edwin H. Zeidell. *The German Quarterly,* September 1964.

[5] J. M. Seidman. *Readings on Educational Psychology.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1955.

[6] "Evaluation of the Effect of Foreign Language Study in the Elementary School Upon Achievement in the High School." Research performed under contract with the U. S. Office of Education, Somerville Public Schools, Somerville, New Jersey, July 1962.

ect indicated that systematic study of a foreign language in grades three through eight did not detract from competence in basic disciplines, nor did these students experience any discernible handicap in high school classes.

College freshmen who have studied foreign languages in high school do significantly better in college than freshmen of the same socioeconomic level and IQ who have not studied foreign languages previously.[7]

There is a clearly established trend for colleges and universities throughout the United States to increase entrance and graduation requirements so that between two and four years of foreign language study are advisable.[8]

Foreign language instruction represents one of the most crucial areas of concentration in training programs for positions as Peace Corps volunteers. The length of orientation and training often depends upon the time needed to acquire minimum communication skills in the foreign language.

Colleges and universities have encouraged programs of study abroad. Over 300 programs have been established with a total annual enrollment of approximately 10,000 students.[9] Study abroad in foreign languages is essential to our national interest since it increases our firsthand knowledge of other peoples and civilizations.

The audio-lingual approach is based upon and paralleled by recent advances in linguistic science and allied fields which have contributed to a new view of language and language learning. In this view, understanding and speaking are regarded as primary objectives and sound bases for systematically acquiring reading and writing skills. The underlying observation is that understanding and speaking are largely a matter of habit, not knowledge. Within this approach, there is no need for educational prerequisites; therefore, foreign language instruction may begin earlier in the curriculum than has been customary—preferably in grades three or four.

The chief advantages of early instruction in a foreign language are greater ease in learning and a chance to develop near-native proficiency in pronunciation and intonation. Wilder Penfield, a

[7] Robert B. Skelton. "High School Foreign Language Study and Freshman Performance." *School and Society* 85(2113): 203-205; June 8, 1957.

[8] Ilo Remer. *A Handbook for Guiding Students in Modern Foreign Languages.* Bulletin OE-27018, No. 26, 1963. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1963.

[9] *Employment Abroad: Facts and Fallacies.* Washington, D. C.: Foreign Commerce Department, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, 1966.

Canadian neurosurgeon, concludes that the specialized areas of the brain used in speaking are most plastic and receptive to language learning before adolescence.[10]

Since 1952, the Foreign Language Program of the Modern Language Association of America, the oldest and largest American association of scholars, campaigned for the improvement of foreign language teaching in the United States. In 1955, the Steering Committee of the Foreign Language Program formulated "Qualifications for Secondary School Teachers of Modern Foreign Languages." This statement of qualifications established minimal, good, and superior levels of proficiency for seven areas of foreign language teaching competency: (a) listening comprehension, (b) speaking, (c) reading, (d) writing, (e) applied linguistics, (f) civilization and culture, and (g) professional preparation. Nationally standardized qualification tests for teachers of French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish were developed to measure specific language competence in the first six areas. The same professional preparation test is used for all examinees. The entire MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Test for Teachers and Advanced Students requires approximately four hours to administer. It has been used with participants of NDEA language institutes since the summer of 1961.

Research in the field of foreign language education stresses the concept that language is essentially communication. Listening and speaking skills must receive primary emphasis at the beginning levels of a foreign language program, regardless of whether the instructional sequence begins in the elementary, junior high, or senior high school. For example, the ideal beginning program would emphasize the pronunciation, melody, rhythm, stress, and pitch of the target language. It should be required that foreign language teachers and students conduct class in the target language as much as possible. Reading and writing would be introduced only after the sound system had been mastered audio-lingually. In fact, materials selected for teaching reading and writing would closely parallel those already presented audio-lingually. The language laboratory, club, table, newspaper, and associated service projects provide opportunities for the students to gain additional practice in the fundamental language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The successful study of literature in the foreign language can-

[10] Wilder Penfield. "A Consideration of the Neuro-Physiological Mechanisms of Speech and Some Educational Consequences." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 6(51); February 1953.

not precede a high level of competence in these four basic skills. Literature classes must also be conducted in the language in order to maintain communication skills. Key vocabulary must be studied as it relates to the comprehension of plot, characterization, and style, not as an exercise in word-for-word translation.

One of the major responsibilities of the foreign language teacher is to provide a variety of challenging activities which engage students in meaningful manipulation of listening and speaking skills that are so essential for effective communication in the language.

There is an ever-increasing demand for personnel who possess a level of foreign language competence required to represent expanding business and professional interests abroad. Greater international exchange of scientific and technological research and increased attendance at international conferences make the acquisition of communication skills in foreign languages most desirable.

Superior travel facilities and the subsequent growth of tourism have encouraged adults to enroll in more audio-lingual foreign language courses of study than ever before. The ability to communicate in another language results in a more pleasurable experience abroad and greater perception of a foreign culture pattern.

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Employment Abroad: Facts and Fallacies. Washington, D. C.: Foreign Commerce Department, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, 1966.

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Edwin H. Zeidell. *The German Quarterly,* September 1964.

See also: Elizabeth Engle Thompson and Arthur E. Hamalainen. *Foreign Language Teaching in Elementary Schools.* Washington, D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1958.

2

Changing Role of Foreign Language Instruction

FOREIGN language enrollment figures since the turn of the century reveal changes in educational attitudes and practices. The relative popularity of individual languages also reflects changes in political, diplomatic, and economic relationships of the United States and the other world powers.

In the early years of the century, Latin was considered to be an indispensable discipline for the development of an educated man. A majority of those fortunate enough to be attending high schools were preparing to enter college to train for professional or scholarly careers, and over 50 percent of the students studied Latin. About one-fourth studied German and fewer than ten percent were enrolled in French classes. Other languages were not offered.[1]

As the high school population increased dramatically, the percentage of students enrolled in foreign language classes declined. The curriculum was expanded to meet the needs of all students, with those preparing for college no longer the majority.

[1] Marjorie Johnston. *Modern Foreign Languages in the High School.* Bulletin 1958, No. 16, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1958. pp. 44-45.

During the years of the depression, emphasis was placed on practical subjects which would prepare students to earn a living. Languages were usually considered to be a "frill" of no practical value and were de-emphasized.

While the popularity of the study of Latin rests mainly on its traditional importance in the preparation of a cultivated individual, that of the modern languages reflects world conditions. German, very popular until 1915, almost disappeared with the advent of World War I. This language has never been able to regain its former status in our schools, although its value as a tool for scientific research has, in recent years, helped increase enrollments. French, once the language of diplomacy and aristocracy, had limited popularity until World War I. As German declined in popularity, French became somewhat more popular, until the depression years. The decrease of prestige and power of France during World War II led to ever smaller enrollments in French.[2]

Spanish was not offered at the beginning of the century in American high schools. It appeared to a small degree before World War I, and began thereafter to replace German. The Good Neighbor Policy of the 1940's gave an impetus to the study of Spanish. As Americans realized more fully the importance of the countries of the Western Hemisphere to both the political and economic security of the United States, the study of Spanish gradually increased. By 1964 this had become the most popular language studied in our high schools.[3]

The study of Russian is recent in American schools. Although some classes existed during the years when Russia was an ally, the greatest impetus was given the study of the language by the orbiting of Sputnik in 1957 and the subsequent scientific progress by the Soviet Union. Even so, only two-tenths of one percent of our high school students in 1964 elected to study Russian.[4]

Other languages in American high schools, such as Chinese, Italian, Slovak, and Modern Hebrew, have been offered mainly in communities where large ethnic groups exist, while classical Greek and Hebrew have been offered mainly in private and parochial schools.

After World War II, Americans found themselves handicapped

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] James Dershem, Gladys Lund, and Nina Greer Herslow. *Foreign Language Offerings and Enrollments in Secondary Schools, Fall 1964.* New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1966.

[4] *Ibid.*

in international dealings by a scarcity of people trained in foreign languages. During these years, events altered the role of the United States as a world power, and our political, economic, and military involvements in all parts of the world created needs which led to the development of new educational patterns.

Greater numbers of Americans live, work, and travel abroad each year. In order to represent their own interests and those of their country to the best advantage, more of our citizens who serve in other lands must be able to communicate in languages other than English. In addition, more foreign visitors come to the United States each year, more cultural exchange programs are being established, and the foreign tongues will soon be brought into our homes through the communication satellites, such as Telstar.

Consideration of the future needs of our nation also brings about changes in the pattern of language offerings in our schools. In the Western Hemisphere, Portuguese will certainly be an important language, as closer relationships are developed with Brazil. In the Middle East and parts of Africa, Arabic will assume more importance as an avenue of communication. With our present commitments in Asia, such languages as Japanese and Chinese cannot be ignored.

As language instruction has varied during the years, attitudes toward language learning have modified. When Latin was considered a basic element in education, much stress was given to its importance as a discipline, and students were given a thorough grounding in conjugations, declensions, and translation. Modern languages too often followed the same pattern of instruction with little or no emphasis on oral communication.

As the languages assumed a minor role in the educational scheme, the standard pattern came to be two years of Latin and perhaps two of a modern language. Since two years is not adequate for learning all skills, teachers aimed to develop only reading abilities and some knowledge of grammar. The Coleman Report in 1928 helped establish the two-year reading-oriented program which became the pattern for many years in American high schools.

Foreign language study continued to be the prerogative of the more intelligent students, especially those who planned to go to college. As many colleges dropped language requirements, even in the liberal arts courses, many college bound students elected other areas of study. Classes were fewer and smaller, and foreign language teachers quite understandably were discouraged and on the defensive.

After World War II, it became apparent that those working in the field of foreign languages were faced with developing language courses to meet the needs of the United States in a different role—that of world leadership. A new set of values had to be defined and new objectives established, with emphasis on language as communication. These in turn led to the development of new curriculum and scheduling patterns. New approaches and techniques being developed during this period were greatly influenced by the intensive language courses used in the Army Specialized Training Program during the War to train American soldiers in a period of a few months to communicate in the languages spoken by our enemies as well as by our allies.

A great impetus was given to the development of better modern foreign language programs by Earl McGrath, then U. S. Commissioner of Education, in his address to the members of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association in May 1952. At that time, Dr. McGrath urged language teachers to accept the challenge and responsibility for providing more and better language instruction in longer sequences of study. As a result, a nation-wide conference of leaders in the fields of government, business, industry, and education was organized in 1953 to consider ways and means of improving and increasing instruction in the spoken languages. With funds provided by the Rockefeller Foundation, work was undertaken to develop more effective materials and techniques for longer sequences which were deemed necessary.

The orbiting of Sputnik in 1957 resulted in a reappraisal of our entire educational system, and focused attention on the offerings available in our schools in foreign languages, as well as in mathematics and science.

The inclusion of modern foreign languages in the National Defense Education Act of 1958 brought further realization of the necessity of teaching modern foreign languages, with emphasis on communication, in our American schools. This led to increased efforts for the development of longer sequences of study and the improvement of instruction through better materials, more effective teaching techniques, and greatly improved preservice and in-service education of teachers. Curriculum planning was influenced by educators such as James B. Conant, who emphasized the need for longer sequences of study, preferably four or more years.[5]

[5] James B. Conant. *The American High School Today.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963.

Present-day teaching of modern foreign languages aims toward mastery of all four skills—understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Mastery of skills requires a longer sequence of study. The change in instructional objectives therefore necessitates extending the sequence of study to four or more years. The aim is not merely to expose students to the language by "covering" a great deal of material, but, by intensive and continuous drill, to lead them to a high degree of mastery, or near-native proficiency in the language.

As students learn the language skills, they are given opportunities for gaining insight into the contemporary culture of the country in which the language is spoken. The modern concept of the teaching of culture no longer consists merely of memorizing unrelated information about the history and geography of a country or studying the lives and works of the great artists, writers, scientists, statesmen, and other famous citizens of the country. Rather, an attempt is made to lead the students to a better understanding of the daily lives of the people, and how they cope with the problems of ordinary day-to-day existence. Authentic language patterns are learned in the context of normal cultural situations. By learning about another way of life, neither better nor inferior, but simply different, students progress toward a more sympathetic viewpoint of their world neighbors as individuals, and become aware of the inaccuracies embodied in the stereotypes by which various nationalities are commonly identified. Knowledge of a different culture gives students a better perspective on their own way of living, and leads to a better understanding of international relationships. Those who will travel and work abroad will be able to make a better adjustment to life in lands with different cultural patterns.

In the modern comprehensive high school, the study of foreign language is no longer the prerogative of a favored few. Programs are designed to provide training for students with different interests and abilities who may find proficiency in a foreign language helpful in their careers. Many of those currently enrolled in high school will be making practical use of the foreign languages for communication as they work abroad in many capacities, serving in industry, business, government, or related fields. These students as well as the college bound will need to develop as much mastery as possible of the language skills.[6]

[6] Ilo Remer. *A Handbook for Guiding Students in Modern Foreign Languages.* Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1963.

Obviously, the languages of all the countries with which America has diplomatic and commercial ties cannot be taught in our schools. More schools are now offering at least one long sequence of study leading to a high degree of proficiency in a single language. By a thorough study of one language, students learn how to approach language study, and other languages can be learned with greater facility. They will have acquired a skill which will serve them well if they are later faced with the necessity of learning a language not usually offered in American schools. Students are encouraged to begin second languages which can be continued at the college level.[7]

The teaching of foreign languages in the elementary school (FLES) is recommended where staff and resources make such instruction possible. The extra time in a long sequence, offered when the children are still able to learn to understand and produce sound and structure different from their native tongue, contributes to a more thorough mastery of speaking and understanding.

Events and activities in related areas reflect some of the changes listed. Study programs abroad for high school students are becoming more common, and hundreds of American young people have an opportunity for direct contact with a foreign language and culture. Foreign language camps provide instruction during vacation periods in some areas. More effort is being made to preserve the vast language resources available in many ethnic groups of our country. The development of bilingual schools in areas with large foreign-speaking populations is increasing. High school and college courses in such subjects as history, geography, mathematics, and science are being taught in foreign languages.

Some action in the foreign language field is occurring at the state level. The work of state supervisors of foreign languages is discussed in a later chapter.

Indiana has received a Ford Foundation grant to strengthen foreign language instruction through the Indiana Language Program. Funds received from this source help increase opportunities for further education of teachers through special conferences and classes for both elementary and secondary teachers. Additional consultant service is available to help develop improved foreign language programs at all levels. High school students with outstanding ability in languages are given an opportunity to study abroad and to live with foreign families.

[7] *Ibid.*

Many states require or recommend that high schools increase their offerings in foreign languages. For example, every commissioned high school in Indiana must offer at least two years of a foreign language. In order to receive a first-class commission, a high school is required to offer two years of both a classical and a modern language, and at least three years of one.

California has extended foreign language instruction into the elementary school through legislative action. All elementary schools in the state must provide classes in a foreign language in the sixth grade.

College entrance and graduation requirements affect foreign language programs at elementary and secondary levels. One-third of the American colleges which grant the B.A. degree prescribe foreign language credits for admission. Ninety percent of the colleges require language for graduation. Among the ten percent which do not require language for graduation, thirty-two non-language departments make this a graduate requirement for their majors. At least six others give students an option between foreign language and mathematics.[8]

Among the colleges which do not prescribe languages as an entrance requirement, the majority list these as recommended subjects. A large percentage of students enter with language credits, and a high proportion now study at the intermediate or advanced level in college.

It is evident that the twentieth century has brought about many changes in the role of foreign languages in American education. In addition to being considered a discipline in the liberal arts and humanities, languages have assumed importance as a necessity for national defense, for maintaining our leadership as a world power, for improving communications with the peoples of other nations, for the development of better international relationships, and for facilitating all kinds of American contacts in other lands.

The changing role of languages has resulted in a change of attitude toward language instruction. New goals have been defined. More effective techniques and more appropriate teaching materials have been developed. Curriculum planning and program scheduling must be altered to provide a favorable climate for improvement to meet changing conditions.

[8] Gladys A. Lund and Nina Greer Herslow. *Foreign Language Entrance and Degree Requirements in U. S. Colleges and Universities, Fall 1966.* New York: Materials Center, Modern Language Association of America, 1966.

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3

Methodology

IN THE late '50's and throughout the '60's, the term "audio-lingual" has been used to describe the preferred approach to language teaching. This term implies a priority given to listening comprehension and the spoken language. It means that initial learning of a modern foreign language is through the ear, not through the eye. Thus, a period of oral instruction without use of books or any printed material is an essential component of the "new key" approach. Once the pupils have mastered the sound system of the language and have memorized several dialogues, they begin to read.

During the period of pre-reading instruction, which may last from a few weeks to several months, the homework assignments might consist of listening to discs containing the material presented by the teacher in class. Several textbook companies supply inexpensive discs for pupils to accompany classroom instruction. If no discs are available, pupils' homework assignments might consist of readings in English on the culture and civilization of the country whose language they are studying.

According to Nelson Brooks, a leader in foreign language education who has exerted a profound influence on the field, the amount

of time devoted to the learning of skills in the first level of language study (a level is one year in senior high school, two years in grades seven and eight) should be distributed as follows: listening 50 percent, speaking 30 percent, reading 15 percent, and writing 5 percent.[1]

In order to learn language as it is spoken by natives, the pupils are given dialogues to memorize to perfection. The teacher serves as a model, and with the aid of tapes, discs, visual aids, and, wherever possible, a language laboratory, presents each line of the dialogue as native speakers would say it. The role of the teacher is that of a drill master and choir director, insisting first that pupils repeat all the lines many times in chorus, then individually. The language class of today is a noisy affair with everyone exercising his vocal chords. Gone are the days when silent brooding over a printed page of translations and conjugations characterized language instruction.

In order to provide a certain measure of flexibility in a class where the dialogue is the core of instruction, the teacher engages the class in "directed dialogue." An illustration of this is the following: The teacher tells a boy to ask one of his classmates if he is going to the movies this evening. The classmate is directed to answer that he cannot go because he must study. This exchange continues with as many other members of the class as time permits. In performing this exercise, the pupils learn to manipulate the different verb forms and to practice vocabulary in various contexts.

Another essential learning activity is the pattern practice. This is an oral drill which requires the pupils to make quick changes in person, number, tense, etc., of the major constructions of the language. Again it is necessary for the teacher to serve as a model to demonstrate the manner in which these oral drills are to be performed. Teachers can learn how to do this task in addition to the ones just described by attending NDEA Institutes, if nearby colleges and universities are not offering this type of training.

After the students have mastered several dialogues, directed dialogues, and pattern drills, a small amount of reading is introduced. However, in the beginning stages the only reading the pupils do is the very first dialogue or dialogues that they have memorized to perfection. Even after the reading instruction has begun, the oral work of the class continues and new dialogues are all learned by ear, not by eye. Little by little the pupils learn to read the material they have acquired orally until they are some-

[1] Nelson Brooks. *Language and Language Learning.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1960.

times reading one lesson behind the oral presentation in class. Nevertheless, throughout the first and second levels the pupils learn all new material by hearing it first.

George Scherer identified six stages of reading in a carefully planned sequence of language study in which several years of study are spanned.

Stage 1: Pupils read only what they have memorized in dialogue form.

Stage 2: Pupils read the same vocabulary and structures as in Stage 1, but in different context (recombination readings).

Stage 3: Pupils read contrived readings. These are simple passages written by those who know the limited vocabulary range and structural inventory of pupils who are beginners.

Stage 4: These readings are modified versions of original foreign texts. Difficult words, idioms, and constructions are replaced by those that American pupils in intermediate language classes could understand.

Stage 5: The foreign texts are preserved almost in toto with minor changes for American students. However, there are copious notes and footnotes, several translations, and a dictionary.

Stage 6: This is called liberated reading. By this point in their study, students are reading words in the original with no editorial help.[2]

As pupils advance to level two in their sequence of language study (level two is grade nine after study in grades seven and eight; it is grade ten for those beginning in grade nine), the amount of time devoted to language skills is as follows: listening 30 percent, speaking 20 percent, reading 40 percent, and writing 10 percent.

In level one, after pupils have learned to read several of their dialogues, they begin to practice copying them on paper. These early writing experiences resemble those that children do when they learn to write English. Most of the activity consists of dictation. Only after the pupils have reached Stage 3 or 4[3] in reading do they attempt to write anything original or any free composition.

In the advanced classes (levels four through six),[4] students begin to read literature as well as essays on the culture and civilization of the foreign country. Nevertheless, the oral work does not take a subalternate position; audio-lingual activities still dominate the work of the class.

The applications of the science of linguistics have had a con-

[2] George A. C. Scherer. "A System for Teaching Modern Foreign Language Reading." *Teacher's Notebook in Modern Foreign Languages.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., Spring 1964. Copyright © 1964, by George A. C. Scherer. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

[3] Brooks, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[4] For a discussion of levels, see Brooks, *ibid.*, p. 118.

siderable impact on foreign language teaching and learning. Linguists have pointed out that the spoken form of a language is very different from its written form. The spoken language has its own rules of grammar, quite distinct from that of writing. The real language, say the linguists, is the spoken form; writing is a rough attempt at describing the oral language and is therefore twice removed from reality. This is the basic argument for teaching, in our classrooms, the spoken language first. There is enough empirical evidence to show that seeing the printed page first will cause students to mispronounce to the point where all subsequent instruction requires a great deal of remedial work.

The credit for the construction of pattern drills is due mostly to the linguists. By manipulating the different forms of verbs, nouns, etc., as well as performing transformation on word order, the students arrive at a point where they produce a large number of well-formed sentences. At this point, the teacher either gives the students the generalization in English or helps them to arrive at its formulation. This process is basically inductive in procedure.

Opponents of the new approach and those who do not understand it completely claim that the study of grammar is neglected or ignored. Nothing could be further from the truth. In order to produce well-formed sentences in a language, one must know its grammar, whether intuitively or through analysis. It is true that students in up-to-date language classes do not spend their time conjugating verbs and translating their texts. However, they devote large amounts of time to correct usage and generalizations. The truth is that a great deal of attention is given to grammar, although it is not the old-fashioned decoding variety.

Underlying the audio-lingual approach is the psychological process of conditioning or the stimulus-response theory. Language is a set of habits. In order to acquire these habits, constant and intensive practice is required.

Before the advent of the audio-lingual approach the common practice in most foreign language classes was to talk in English about the grammar of the foreign language. There were long analytical discussions about the uses of the subjunctive, the partitive, the imperfect versus the preterite, etc. At best, the pupils could conjugate a few verbs and translate some reading passages. Learning was passive and the students were unable to communicate with foreign peoples.

The major objective, today, at least in the elementary and secondary levels, is to be able to converse with native speakers and

understand the spoken form of the foreign language. Therefore, the core of the foreign language class are the dialogue and the pattern drill.

The opponents of the audio-lingual approach claim that students become robots due to the constant repetition of structural drills and conversations, but this depends on the effectiveness of the teacher. A competent teacher knows how to vary the activities and make the materials and drills interesting. Utilizing many visuals and props is a necessity in an audio-lingual class. Unfortunately, many of the new materials have poor or inadequate visuals which make it imperative for the teacher to supplement the text with his own.

Wilga Rivers[5] believes that students should be given explanations for the structures they will commit to memory, that a certain amount of deductive reasoning would help reinforce the learning process. She also proposes that students be given the written symbols very soon after the oral forms have been presented. Her conviction is that a multiple-skill approach will facilitate language learning, that the eye and ear should work together. The danger here, as we know from many decades of foreign language teaching, is that the early introduction of writing leads students to very faulty pronunciation. It is also a well-known fact that once students acquire habits of poor pronunciation, it is almost impossible to correct them.

One of the most comprehensive studies in methods of teaching foreign languages was done at the University of Colorado under the direction of George Scherer with a grant from the U. S. Office of Education.[6] Students enrolled in beginning German were divided into two groups: one to be taught audio-lingually and without books for an extended period of time; the other to be taught traditionally and with the use of books from the outset. The students were to be examined periodically during their two years of German. Unfortunately, the number of students decreased considerably in the second year of the experiment due to attrition. Another problem was the lack of standardized listening comprehension and speaking tests at the time the research was done. Despite these shortcomings and other variables, the study showed that the audio-lingual group

[5] Wilga M. Rivers. *The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

[6] George Scherer and Michael Wertheimer. *A Psycholinguistic Experiment in Foreign Language Teaching.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1964.

spoke and understood oral German better than the traditional group and could read at the same level of proficiency.

For the past seven years, Congress has appropriated approximately seven and a quarter million dollars a year for NDEA Institutes that would help teachers meet the challenges of the new approach. Almost 25,000 foreign language teachers have attended these institutes. Despite this great expenditure of money, time, and energy, about half of the nation's foreign language teachers are still using the outdated grammar-translation approach which failed in the past to produce any more than a handful of language enthusiasts and specialists.

The influence of NDEA language institutes on college and university foreign language curricula to date has been almost negligible.

Alongside this rather gloomy picture, there is still a great deal of optimism because of the flourishing foreign language programs in various towns and cities in certain parts of the country. Most state foreign language supervisors spend their time conducting workshops whose purpose is to upgrade language instruction and provide experiences for teachers who have not had the opportunity to attend institutes.

We are in a transition period. Each week, groups of teachers are being reached and retrained. Many of the teachers in programs of professional preparation in colleges and universities have also taught in or directed NDEA Institutes. Thus, in the future, we will certainly see profound changes in the methodology of foreign language teaching and learning.

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4

Materials and Equipment in Foreign Language Instruction

RECENT changes in attitudes toward the study of foreign languages and the revolution in teaching approaches and techniques have necessitated the development of a multiplicity of instructional aids and equipment. These developments have tended in turn to influence methods of instruction.

Foreign language textbooks today are carefully programmed and developed by teams of native speakers, psychologists, cultural anthropologists, and foreign language teachers. The choice of content must be linguistically sound for development of skills, and based upon accepted principles of educational psychology. Cultural anthropologists aid in the choice of selections which will best illustrate current cultural patterns, and native speakers of the language select authentic patterns of pronunciation, structure, and vocabulary to be learned. Skillful classroom teachers help select appropriate and interesting materials for the various age-grade levels, and devise effective techniques for instruction.

Since desired outcomes can be achieved only through longer sequences of study, modern materials are designed in terms of series of levels which are intended to be mastered in varying periods of study, depending on the time allotted for the study of foreign lan-

guages in individual school systems. Most current texts are being designed for four to six levels. Study is adjusted to the needs of students in individual schools, and as much time is devoted to each level as is necessary for mastery of the language patterns presented. Levels are not necessarily equated with years of study.

Modern materials for teaching the spoken languages include a variety of instructional aids which are an integral part of the foreign language program, and which must be utilized to achieve maximum effectiveness in the use of the materials. These instructional aids should be readily available at all times, and teachers must be trained to make the most efficient use of them.

The greater emphasis now placed upon the listening and speaking skills, makes the use of recordings imperative. These materials, on records or tape, provide (a) excellent models of native voices for imitation by the students; (b) drill patterns for oral practice essential for developing the desired speech habits; (c) a variety of recordings in the foreign language for practice in listening and understanding. All foreign language teachers, therefore, should be supplied with tape recorders and record players for use in the classroom and for personal use in lesson preparation.

Since modern instruction is designed to develop a new set of speech habits, a great deal of opportunity for practice must be provided. In addition to the classroom drill conducted by a skillful teacher, further practice in a language laboratory or electronic classroom is advisable. The electronic classroom provides a better opportunity for hearing clearly and repeating accurately as exercises and drills are presented. A laboratory situation in addition to class time is conducive to greater individual progress toward the goal of mastery of pronunciation and grammatical patterns of speech. Electronic classrooms and laboratories may be either permanent or portable, depending upon resources available in individual school systems.

It must be emphasized that the language laboratory is an excellent tool which can be an invaluable instructional aid. However, the laboratory is of little or no value if it is not used to best advantage by the classroom teacher. The laboratory lesson is designed to strengthen the students' control of the material which has already been taught in the language class. It must be completely integrated with the text in use and must provide additional drill on structures, content, or sound patterns included in the lesson being studied.

Before a laboratory is installed, a well-articulated, sequential language program should be designed by the entire language staff under the direction of a coordinator well informed on current the-

ories and practices in modern foreign language education. Objectives and expected outcomes should be clearly defined and outlined. Methods of teaching and instructional materials should be adopted which will best achieve the established goals, and the continued cooperation of the staff must be assured by adequate supervision and continued in-service education.

For best results it is evident that text materials should be selected which are designed for a continuous, articulated sequence of study, and which include the instructional aids that will be of most benefit in developing the language skills and achieving the goals established for the program. Since modern texts are carefully programmed, it is advisable to choose one series and use it as intended through all levels. The use of a variety of text materials from different programs leads to problems of articulation between levels.

The laboratory does not function by itself. For maximum efficiency, there should be a director or teacher with adequate assigned time to assume responsibility for assuring effectiveness of the laboratory. Such a person can arrange for proper scheduling of its use and for the maintenance of equipment and materials in good working order.

In order to make effective use of the laboratory, teachers must have sufficient time allotted for planning and preparation of materials for each scheduled laboratory session. Haphazard playing of tapes will be of little value. Each day's drill must consist of exercises selected to complement the classroom work.

Language teachers cannot be expected to prepare their own laboratory exercises. Construction of good pattern drills is a specialized skill which can be done only by trained linguists. Those rare teachers who have had the necessary linguistic training seldom have time available for developing such materials. If the texts in use are not accompanied by integrated taped materials, teachers should have extra preparation time available for adapting or constructing drill materials if they are to make efficient use of the laboratory facilities.

Even if excellent materials are provided, the teacher still must have time allotted for planning the laboratory session. He must listen to the tapes to be used by each class, choose the exercises to be used, indicate their location on the tape, become thoroughly familiar with the content in order to monitor effectively, and place the tapes where they will be accessible when needed. Valuable time is lost in the laboratory session if adequate preparation is not made in advance.

Besides the recorded materials, many modern programs of foreign language study include a generous supply of effective visual aids in the form of posters, pictures, slides, filmstrips, and motion picture films. These, too, are closely integrated with the content of the basic text, and are designed to develop an understanding of the foreign language and culture.

For more effective presentations and drill exercises, excellent foreign language teachers make extensive use of all aids available, in addition to the commercial products which accompany the texts. Opaque projectors provide an excellent means for showing realia, illustrations, items of cultural interest, or visuals used to present dialogues or establish meanings. The overhead projector is a valuable teaching tool for adding visual dimension to oral presentation and demonstration. It lends itself to a variety of classroom uses including the teaching of reading skills, developing vocabulary, clarifying structural principles, correcting written exercises, and testing. Other visual aids commonly used include illustrations on flannel and magnetic boards, drawings, pictures, models, puppets, and actual objects.

In many localities the use of television, radio programs, and telephone lessons makes it possible to extend foreign language instruction in areas where such opportunities are limited by lack of trained teachers or financial resources. Such programs are more common at the elementary level. The basic course presented through these media may include additional recorded or visual aids. To be effective, such instruction must be supplemented by warm-up and/or follow-up sessions conducted by a specialist or trained classroom teacher.

As good programmed courses become available in various languages, some schools provide for individual self-instruction in laboratories, or in booths or study carrels located in a materials center or in the school library. Students unable to schedule language classes, or those who wish to study languages not offered in the school curriculum may thus have an opportunity to learn the language of their choice. Programs usually consist of a text by which the student masters the language step by step with the help of recorded materials. Some programs also include visual aids. Students may learn languages at their own individual speed through seeing and hearing, as well as through textbook study.

Because of the interest of the United States Government in increasing and improving instruction in modern foreign languages in American schools and colleges, ample financial assistance is avail-

able for providing instructional aids. Language laboratories, electronic and audio-visual equipment of all kinds, and all non-consumable supplementary aids are approvable under Title III, NDEA.

Schools wishing to build superior foreign language programs will select appropriate audio-lingual materials, and will supply all the aids needed to use these to best advantage.

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5

Evaluation

THE emphasis on audio-lingual skills in modern foreign language instruction necessitates new-type tests. The old-type paper-and-pencil tests do not measure students' ability in speaking and listening comprehension. Indeed, most tests of this kind do not really measure reading and writing skills, although they purport to do so. Most of them consist of sentences or isolated words to be translated, verb endings to be supplied, and incorrect language to be corrected. This kind of test no longer meets the needs of changing foreign language curricula.

What can be done to evaluate students' programs during the period of pre-reading instruction, which lasts from one to three months or more? Youngsters cannot prepare reading or writing lessons at home since there are no textbooks to consult. In many schools, however, the students are given discs to take home so that, using a record player, they can listen to the dialogues that have been presented in class. By dint of constant repetition and practice they can learn a large number of meaningful, situational dialogues.

Schools that have laboratories or electronic classrooms can measure student progress by recording what each youngster has memorized at home, as well as the pattern drills, directed dialogues,

and other audio-lingual exercises which have been introduced and practiced in class.

Careful and consistent monitoring of the student's performance during each laboratory session is imperative for proper evaluation of his progress in the development of audio-lingual skills.

In order to test listening comprehension, some teachers distribute drawings they have made themselves, asking the students to encircle numbers which correspond to the pictures they are identifying or describing.

Other listening comprehension devices consist of completion tests. The teacher reads three or four sentences from which students are to choose the most logical response. No words are written; it is a question of hearing and understanding the spoken language. Answers are indicated by checking numbers or letters.

Of great assistance to the profession was the advent of the *Modern Language Association's Cooperative Tests.* In 1961, the U. S. Office of Education contracted with the Modern Language Association to produce new-type tests that would evaluate foreign language skills of students in grades 7-14 who have had an audio-lingual background followed by reading and writing experiences. The skills to be examined were reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension in five languages: French, Spanish, German, Russian, and Italian. The MLA in turn, entered into a contract with the Educational Testing Service to engage specialists and produce the tests. A large group of linguists, high school teachers and college professors of foreign languages, test experts, and native informants worked together to share their knowledge and skills. The tests were given to thousands of students across the country and norms were established. This was the first time that listening comprehension and speaking tests were normed and standardized.

The format of the four sections of this test is as follows:

Reading: This is a comprehension test. Students are asked to read sentences or short passages and then choose an answer that either paraphrases, is an extension of the meaning implied in the test item, or a rejoinder to a dialogue type situation.

Listening Comprehension: This is similar to the reading test except that the material is heard rather than read. There are also some pictorial cues.

Speaking: Students are asked to respond to audio and visual cues. Their answers are recorded on tape or discs, depending on the facilities of the individual schools. One section of this test is an echo-type or mimicry exercise in which students are told to repeat what the native voice utters on the tape: it is a test of their pronunciation and intonation. This is in line with the current practice of asking students in class to perform dialogues while being shown

flash cards and other visual cues. It also presupposes that the students will have had practice in doing pattern drills and directed dialogues.

Writing: Students are given sentences with one or more words missing, usually prepositions or verb forms. The correct answers are to be filled in. There is also a short dialogue to be composed by the students.

Another up-to-date test is the *Pimsleur Proficiency Test* in French, Spanish, and German. It consists of three parts: speaking, reading comprehension, and writing.

The speaking section contains pictures which the students are asked to identify. In addition, the examinees are to repeat utterances after the voice on the tape in order to test their pronunciation.

The reading section contains passages followed by questions based on the material.

The writing section is composed of two parts. In the first part, students are asked to fill in blanks, write sentences in the plural, change adjectives from masculine to feminine form, and give the correct forms of certain verbs. Part two consists of pictures to be described; some are one sentence descriptions, others are three.

These tests are entirely in the foreign language, do not use translation, and do not utilize incorrect language. They clearly reflect current audio-lingual practices.

Classroom teachers as well as principals and administrators will find two prognostic tests on the market: *The Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery* (PLAB)[1] and *The Modern Language Aptitude Test* (MLAT).[2]

The PLAB uses a tone language to test students' ability in auditory discrimination. It also tests English vocabulary by giving one word items followed by five choices among which there is a synonym. Another section deals with language analysis—the ability to reason logically in terms of a foreign language.

The last component is sound-symbol association—an association of sounds with their written symbols.

In addition to the above factors, the PLAB assesses students' grade point average in academic areas other than foreign languages as well as interest in learning a foreign language.

These six elements result in an effective prognostic test.

The MLAT is divided into five parts. Parts I and II are on tape. Part I measures students' ability to memorize numbers. Part II is

[1] Paul Pimsleur. *The Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966.

[2] John Carroll and Stanley Sapon. *The Modern Language Aptitude Test.* New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1958-59.

sound-symbol recognition. Part III gives one-word phonetic spelling clues and five choices, the correct answer being the synonym in the group. Part IV is language analysis—grammatical usage. Part V is called "paired associations"; the examinees are to memorize 24 Kurdish words and are asked to recognize them in Kurdish sentences.

Although prognostic tests have value, it would be well to remember that the best way to determine whether students can learn a foreign language is to let them study it for a semester or a year.

In the FLES field there are few evaluative instruments. The *Parlons Français* materials have their own tests based on the content and structures presented in the films. The children are shown pictures of individual objects and are asked to identify them in French. A few of the pictures involve activities which are to be described, such as jumping rope or bathing at the seashore. The children's answers are recorded on tapes.

Another FLES test is called *The Common Concepts Test.*[3] It is a listening comprehension test in four languages: French, Spanish, German, and English. The students look at a series of pictures (twenty-three different ones) and hear native voices describing one in each set. They are to choose the one being described.

The College Entrance Board Examinations have been undergoing revisions that reflect to a certain extent the new methodology. These examinations expect, however, knowledge of a large vocabulary, which can be acquired only through large amounts of reading. Teachers should know in advance which of their students plan to take these examinations and then give these students extra reading and writing assignments. The average audio-lingual course will probably not prepare students for these examinations.

The Advanced Placement Examinations are for the small percentage of high school students who are gifted and very advanced academically. Even these students cannot prepare for the examinations alone. They must be guided by a highly trained teacher who can offer them outside help and/or a special advanced placement class. Students who successfully pass the examinations are placed in advanced courses when they enter college.

A foreign language program is no better than the teacher or teachers in it. In selecting competent teachers, administrators should rely heavily on the *MLA Proficiency Tests for Teachers and Advanced Students.* Some states, such as Pennsylvania, require all teacher applicants to take these tests. They give a great deal of

[3] *The Common Concepts Test.* Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, California: California Test Bureau.

information on the degree of skill in speaking, listening comprehension, reading, and writing attained by the examinees. In addition, there are sections on Professional Preparation, Applied Linguistics, and Culture and Civilization.

These tests reveal far more about the examinees' competency than college transcripts.

Teachers and administrators will find excellent material on foreign language testing by securing the work kit and filmstrip entitled *Modern Languages: Teaching and Testing*, developed by the Cooperative Test Division, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey.

The intangible elements in a foreign language program are the most important and the most difficult to measure. Thus far, there is no known test to evaluate the insights which students acquire from their experiences in foreign language classes—the empathy, understanding, and good will that constitute the major purpose of foreign language study. This is an area for future researchers and test instructors to explore.

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6

Scheduling the Foreign Language Program

MOST administrators and teachers now realize that a two-year foreign language instructional program in the junior and senior years of high school is definitely inadequate. This is particularly true if the goal of foreign language instruction is communication in the language being studied.

The Foreign Service Institute of the U. S. Department of State has conducted intensive foreign language programs aimed at achieving functional mastery in listening, speaking, reading, and writing French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. Subsequent research suggests that six hundred hours of classroom activity are required to achieve functional mastery of French, German, Italian, or Spanish. Russian requires approximately eleven hundred hours. These figures represent only the hours of necessary classroom exposure and do not include the time spent in home study.

In order to satisfy the minimum requirement of six hundred hours of exposure in the commonly-taught languages of French, German, and Spanish, a four-year sequence with 180 fifty-minute classes per year would be the minimum acceptable program. We usually think of such a foreign language program as one which might be scheduled in grades 9-12 as charted in Table 1. The assumption

is that there are 180 days per year and that each period is fifty minutes. Credit refers to the amount of high school transcript credit earned. This four-year sequence provides six hundred hours of classroom exposure.

Grade	Level	Credit	M	T	W	Th	F
9	I	1	X	X	X	X	X
10	II	1	X	X	X	X	X
11	III	1	X	X	X	X	X
12	IV	1	X	X	X	X	X

Table 1. Usual Schedule of Foreign Language Program, Grades 9-12.

The major objective in scheduling a well-articulated foreign language instructional sequence is that it presents a continuous, uninterrupted program of study. Since the acquisition of fundamental foreign language skills is a cumulative process requiring maximum exposure and practice, the sequence may extend from grades 7-12 and may be scheduled as indicated in Table 2. Again, there are 180 days per year and each period is fifty minutes. This six-year sequence also provides six hundred hours of classroom activity.

Grade	Level	Credit	M	T	W	Th	F
7	Ia	½	½	½	½	½	½
8	Ib	½	½	½	½	½	½
9	II	1	X	X	X	X	X
10	III	1	X	X	X	X	X
11	IVa	½	X		X		X
12	IVb	½		X		X	

Table 2. A Cumulative Sequence in Foreign Language Study, Grades 7-12.

Greater flexibility is gained in staffing and implementing the junior high foreign language program if seventh and eighth grade sections can be scheduled within the same hour, thus enabling one teacher to present both lessons. Study sections may be organized during the portion of the hour when students are not participating in language class. This procedure is superior to presenting one-hour sessions of language study two or three days a week. Daily exposure is most important during the initial stages of foreign language instruction. The practice of offering language study during only the first semesters in grades seven and eight must be discontinued. This

is comparable to studying a musical instrument for four months and then abandoning it until eight months later.

Students who begin in junior high and remain in the program for six years should be more proficient in using the foreign language than those who study for four years in high school. The purpose of a longer sequence is lost if students tend to conclude their study before completing the entire program or if there are time gaps between levels of instruction.

Although daily exposure is required at the beginning and intermediate levels of foreign language instruction, it is often desirable to provide advanced language study two or three days per week. Other courses or study sessions may be scheduled on alternate days, thus making it possible for students to complete the six-year sequence of study. It would again be possible for one teacher to present both IVa and IVb course materials. This arrangement is far better than the procedure of placing students from these levels in the same class. After four years of daily exposure in grades 7-10, proficiency in fundamental listening and speaking skills will be at a level high enough to warrant independent study. Assignments in reading and writing could be discussed in the foreign language and proficiency in all language skills would be increased.

Research by Wilder Penfield and others concludes that it is most advantageous to begin foreign language instruction between the ages of five and ten. Children in this age group are able to imitate sounds more accurately than adolescents or adults. There is less interference from their native sound system and younger children are less self-conscious about making errors.[1]

Much of the success of a foreign language program in the elementary schools depends upon the extent to which it is an integral part of the entire foreign language instructional sequence. Little is gained if students must begin Level I of foreign language study in grade seven after three years of exposure in grades 4-6. Twenty to twenty-five minutes daily in grades 4-6 should enable the student to complete a large part of Level I. Table 3 illustrates a nine-year sequence providing five levels and 780 hours of classroom exposure. Such a program could provide an in-depth understanding of another culture pattern, a high level of proficiency in language skills, and an introduction to works of literature written in the language.

It would be best to schedule three language tracks if the enroll-

[1] Wilder Penfield. "A Consideration of the Neuro-Physiological Mechanisms of Speech and Some Educational Consequences." *Bulletin of The American Academy of Arts and Sciences.* Vol. 6, No. 51; February 1953.

Grade	Level	Credit	M	T	W	Th	F
4	Ia	⅓		20-25 minutes daily			
5	Ib	⅓		20-25 minutes daily			
6	Ic	⅓		20-25 minutes daily			
7	IIa	½	½	½	½	½	½
8	IIb	½	½	½	½	½	½
9	III	1	X	X	X	X	X
10	IV	1	X	X	X	X	X
11	Va	½	X		X		X
12	Vb	½		X		X	

Table 3. A Nine-year Sequence in Foreign Language Instruction, Grades 4-12.

ment is large enough to warrant this procedure. Students could begin foreign language study in grades four, seven, or nine and complete sequences of nine, six, and four years respectively. Students beginning in the elementary, junior, or senior high schools should be permitted to proceed through the foreign language instructional program as a single group rather than being placed with more mature students as they progress through the intermediate and advanced levels of study.

Each level of instruction requires materials designed for a particular age group. The elementary, junior high, and senior high school programs should be compatible if each level is taught by well-trained foreign language specialists teaching materials that provide smooth transitions among levels and program continuity throughout the instructional sequence.

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Role of the Administrator

FOREIGN language educators and teachers realize that planning and implementing a successful foreign language program depend more upon the degree and consistency of top-level administrative support than upon any other single factor. It is not realistic to expect administrators to be familiar with the constantly expanding assortment of materials and equipment utilized in the audio-lingual presentation of course content in foreign languages. However, there are a number of administrative procedures and policies that could inspire teachers and could encourage the establishment of a well-coordinated sequence of foreign language instruction.

It is necessary for teachers to agree upon the methods and techniques employed in teaching the target language. For example, only confusion can result when students are required to change from an audio-lingual to a traditional approach. Specific objectives in listening, speaking, reading, and writing should be clarified so that teachers can assign priorities within each level of instruction. A curriculum guide is especially useful for beginning teachers and those new to the school system.

It is essential that each teacher have an opportunity to visit

his colleagues' classes in order to facilitate optimum program continuity. It would be especially helpful if teachers could observe foreign language classes in feeder schools. For example, a high school foreign language teacher could take a visitation day in which he would observe first-year foreign language classes in the junior high schools supplying students for his high school. It is also advisable for teachers to visit advanced classes in the same school. Intervisitation will lead to a more complete understanding of the comprehensive foreign language program and will develop an awareness and appreciation of problems existing at each level of instruction.

One person should be responsible for planning and implementing the entire foreign language program. Hopefully, the foreign language coordinator will be able to supervise classroom teachers and assist them in evaluating the results of their courses. He should have sufficient released time to enable him to offer an in-service workshop program aimed at improving instruction at each level of the foreign languages presented in the school system.

Regularly scheduled in-service workshops should also include opportunities for teacher committees to suggest and discuss the use of supplementary materials and equipment, classroom enrichment activities, and possible textbook revisions or adoptions.

Uniform textbook adoption is recommended at all levels of instruction within the school system. This policy facilitates interschool student transfer and makes it easier to advise newcomers to the school district.

Teacher committees should formulate foreign language placement tests evaluating student proficiency at each level of instruction. This procedure will establish the necessary objective criteria which are so essential when enrolling a transfer student in intermediate levels of the foreign language program.

One of the most difficult tasks of the administrator is that of employing foreign language teachers who have the competence necessary to teach listening and speaking skills effectively. Students develop an awareness of the correct pronunciation and intonation of a foreign language by mimicking the voice of the classroom teacher and by practicing with the aid of correlated lesson records and tapes. Acquiring facility with the sound system of a language demands constant exposure, repetition, and review. The teacher must be the model and leader for these activities; therefore, teachers must have the ability to produce the critical sounds of the language. It is usually not possible for an administrator to

judge a teaching candidate's audio-lingual proficiency in the foreign language by reviewing a grade transcript. A committee of foreign language teachers responsible for screening applicants in each language could interview prospective teachers and make recommendations to the administrator regarding the candidate's ability to communicate in the foreign language.

There are two excellent publications which may be used in planning and implementing a foreign language program. *Should My Child Study a Foreign Language?* is the title of a pamphlet issued by the Publications Division of the National Education Association in cooperation with the NEA Department of Foreign Languages.[1] This publication has been used successfully at PTA meetings to clarify the nature of the foreign language program and to summarize its objectives. Every modern foreign language teacher and guidance counselor would profit from reading *A Handbook for Guiding Students in Modern Foreign Languages* by Ilo Remer.[2]

Foreign language instruction is in a state of transition from the traditional to the audio-visual-lingual approach. Multi-media presentations make it necessary for each full-time foreign language teacher to have a permanent room assignment. Coordination of media and programmed materials requires more preparation time for each level of instruction. The number of lesson preparations must be kept to one or two per day whenever possible. Films and filmstrips should be previewed, tapes must be reviewed, and follow-up activities must be coordinated with lesson content. Evaluation of pronunciation and intonation causes a significant increase in the time that each foreign language teacher must devote to testing his students individually.

If one teacher is responsible for maintaining the language laboratory and scheduling its use, his teaching load should be reduced accordingly. Teachers assigned to standing committees on textbook revision and advanced placement should have fewer responsibilities with extracurricular projects.

State supervisors of foreign languages, professional organizations, and host institutions provide workshops and meetings throughout the year for foreign language teachers. Representative attendance at these conferences should be encouraged, and information should be disseminated to the entire foreign language faculty.

[1] National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

[2] Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

Hopefully, teachers will be able to receive credit on the salary schedule by attending summer institutes in foreign language training. Travel and study abroad should also merit consideration with respect to establishing additional salary increments.

Cooperative efforts by school district administrators, building principals, guidance counselors, and foreign language teachers should result in a superior foreign language program which challenges students and maintains community interest in foreign language instruction.

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8

Future Trends

IN THE FUTURE, foreign language students will be able to intensify and internalize speaking proficiency in the target language. Well coordinated program materials provide a variety of voices for presenting important practice materials through more effective use of visual aids, tape recorders, electronic classrooms, and language laboratories. Such materials and equipment facilitate the ability to accommodate individual differences creatively within each classroom.

Students will be able to engage in more self-instruction and self-evaluation with the extended use of dial-access audio and visual equipment. Teachers will rely on more and better audio-visual materials by utilizing multi-media presentations of lesson content. Greater sophistication of materials, equipment, and methods of presentation will encourage a higher degree of self-evaluation and self-instruction. Students will be able to spend more time with programmed materials in independent study carrels. More flexible scheduling of facilities will enable students to arrange practice sessions at various times throughout the day.

More institutions of higher learning will establish programs for studying foreign languages abroad. Teacher and student ex-

changes will encourage greater intercultural communication. Visiting teacher and teacher aide programs will make it possible for our foreign language classes to have resource personnel who can assist with language instruction and provide insights into another way of life. An expanded American Field Service program will lead to an increased awareness of the importance of understanding and perceiving another person's views as he expresses these in his native language.

Language coordinators, language laboratory directors, and instructional materials centers are essential for the organization and implementation of more effective sequences of foreign language instruction. The multiplicity of materials, equipment, and facilities is conducive to team teaching, an interdisciplinary approach, and modular scheduling.

Better teachers will continue to staff more language classes arranged into longer sequences of instruction which will begin in the elementary school. The selection and range of foreign languages will be extended to include many languages that are not commonly offered today.

By relying on pertinent articles in professional publications such as the *Bulletin* of the Department of Foreign Languages of the National Education Association and *The Modern Language Journal*, teachers will receive help and information with respect to teaching foreign languages. The Modern Language Association and the associations of teachers of the various foreign languages provide resource materials as well as surveys of successful teaching practices.

The United States Office of Education, through the Central Educational Research Information Center (ERIC), publishes a monthly abstract catalog entitled *Research in Education*. The fundamental concept of ERIC is that every significant educational document should be available to teachers, researchers, supervisors, administrators, and other interested persons. The MLA/ERIC clearinghouse collects research and related information dealing with the teaching of modern foreign languages commonly offered in American education. Through this service, foreign language teachers may obtain information with regard to methods, materials, and equipment; testing; the application of linguistics to the teaching of language learning; analyzing and teaching cultural and intercultural context; teaching the foreign literature; curricular problems and developments; teacher education and qualifications at all levels.

In the present world of instant communication, understanding

one's neighbor who may speak another language is a necessity rather than a luxury. Early exposure to a foreign language and the extension of study through a well-articulated sequence of program continuity should facilitate the development of a wider cultural perspective in the next generation. Offering other courses in the foreign language will make foreign language instruction more vital and will emphasize the objective of learning a foreign language for the purposes of understanding and speaking.

Even greater emphasis will be placed upon the use of audio-visual materials in teaching lesson content audio-lingually; however, audio-lingual placement and competency tests like the *MLA Co-operative Foreign Language Tests* must be used more extensively so that methods of instruction and evaluation will be compatible. (See Chapter 5 on Evaluation.)

In order to develop a program of maximum continuity, teachers must clarify specific objectives for each level of foreign language instruction. Mutual agreement is essential with respect to textbook adoptions and the use of materials and equipment. Inter-school visitations by teachers will lead to increased familiarity with the scope and sequence of the foreign language program and will provide greater unity in the approach to teaching foreign languages in a given school system.

Much more effort and time will be devoted to classroom supervision by qualified personnel who have taught foreign languages. Foreign language coordinators and teacher committees will play more important roles in the procedures for employing and assigning foreign language teachers.

Career opportunities including employment abroad will lead to increased enrollments in foreign language classes and more programs of study abroad in foreign languages. Possibilities for such employment and the need for more intercultural understanding underline the importance of stressing communication skills in the foreign language classroom.